

2-9-1868

Letter from Anne Whitney, 1868 February 9

Anne Whitney

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Recommended Citation

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Feb. 9 - 1868

My beloved mother & father & Sarah & Carrie
& all of you who are laboring under mis-
apprehensions in regard to yr servant's life
& manner of doing here - it gives me
pleasure to let you at rest while I lament
that you sh^d. have borrowed so much trouble
firstly; how co. our dear mother have
got the impression that we look apart-
ments without furniture? Where got you
the idea that we sacrificed our vital
warmth to the cold splendor of marble
floors? We are carpeted every inch of us.
We haven't bought a shiver of furniture.
Our kitchen in spite of our growling sends
down the best dinners in Rome. I betthink
me we did buy 2 or 3 earthen pans. for the
Signora Landoltz is a stingy person. But
all say the same of their proprietors.
I laid in 3 loads - perhaps equal to 1 1/2
cords - of wood last summer & a cheerful
soul - warming fire keeps us every evening
& the day. I estimate the result of this
morning's review of the wood remaining
that we have enough left to last us through
this Spring & into next fall. Each load of
wood cut & sawed & borne up 4 flights of stairs
on one's shoulders costs \$3.70 in the summer
season. I scarcely know what to be cost
I have forgotten it - as Mrs. Jones had the
ag. tongue in her winter's sojourn in Paris.
This morning I tore open one of the compartments
of the parcel wh. Abby had packed up last Dec.

reel. That was good news about Henry Locke
& I dare say he will make the new leg do
as many shewels as the old.
Edmonie Lewis has turned Catholic & her
reasons for it are better than her Catholic-
ism. Fanny. The American Clergymen
then took no notice of her & her Catholic
acquaintance were very friendly. I was in
her studio the other day. I believe fu-
riously. She is doing very well. She has
made & sold quite a no. of little groups.
Of wh. the Index is the subject. They
are very rude in construction & show a
want of the very elementary knowledge
of the art. I think she might struggle
up to something if she wd. once for all ac-
knowledge herself the necessity of being in-
structed. But she is haunted by the belief
of a fear that people will say she doesn't
do her own work. I think she rather knows
our Suss what others are doing & does not know
how far she wants. I shd. be glad to help her
if I cd. but I think the fact that I have tried
to do so bef. (wh. she acknowledges) by my critics
marked her a little chary about trusting me
when alone. It seems to me she prefers to blunder
on in her own way & criticism obstructed wd.
be of no service. I advised her to get some good
artist to go in once a week & see her work - but
she did not like the idea. However she makes
better things than she cd. have done at home
& so if anyone asks again if you can say I think
she has made some progress. It would do no harm
to show out of the house.
It is a soft moist day & the tiled roofs all
round & under us are as green with their covering
of aged moss as a kitchen garden in May, &

as renovated. Next Sat. the Carnival begins
next Friday Evng. the neighbors from the piers &
below were up here - & what's com. knocking at
the door that Mr. Kimball from Boston. his
wife & daughter. Abby's schoolmate. It was
very like Boston to hear Mr. T. talk & we had
quite a pleasant talk from them.
We see the Phoenix every day or two. G. How has
just been up with a Mr. Delano. Many were
in yesterday when I was reading Mr. Little's book
as there were other callers at the time I did not
visit it when she wanted for had not recd.
a letter from her wh. has bef. this probably
been answered.

Sunday 14. How I long to see you, is something
it is useless to talk as it is to think about.
But the feeling is there in my heart of hearts.
I send the picture to day, wh. may help you to
see us as we without picture see you. The
crosses will smooth out when the photo is
pasted on a card. My work is progressing very
well I think. The last week I have been upon
the statuettes of the boy, wh. having been brought
by Giovanni to pretty nearly the same shape of
the large one, I shall have to work on for 3 weeks
more perhaps to make what it shd. be. I am
thankful to know that my improved copy is
most find the old one bad as it really is. That
William De Vos sent one of his enormous shop-
bills to me directed to the Lincoln case. by it I
see he has copied in direct contradiction my request
& his promise. As if it weren't enough that he shd.
have kept that statue out all the time he had had
it with that ridiculous name. I trust you have
got it safe in Delaware by this. I hope he hasn't
made you believe it is best to leave it there. he is
wholly unreliable - & in any case I want it sent out
home. The window is going on slowly. They are curious

(the friend here) I shd have one finished & ready
to be seen, in my studio - I do not receive visitors
now - waiting till there is something done besides
it is useless to have one's time overstated by
this eternal complaining - And that reminds
me that we have been more than ordinarily
gay this week - Thurs. evng. we all went to
a party at Dr. Gould's - not particularly inter-
esting - a number of artists there - among them
Bierstedt - with his prettyish wife - Last
evng we dined with our dentonians - having
gone up there to see the carnival from their
& the Millicent's windows - It is a pretty
sight - looking up & down the Corso as we do
from the latter, to see the throng blackening
the street from end to end - the balconies gay
with colored draperies - & the ladies throwing pellets
the negroes who ~~pass~~ ^{with} ~~below~~ with little
plaster pellets looking like sugar-plums while
they in turn ~~are~~ ^{on} ~~traced~~ to boquets from below
The opening procession was short but very
fine & a cavalcade of beautiful horses followed
by the carriages of the Governor & Cardinals - but
the chief feature of the trial is the racing
of the horses - At the cannon signal a party
of negroes ride up & down the Corso at full
gallop - passing the throng to left & right - &
tho. ~~they~~ it at once fills in again - the winner
having been given no body is responsible for
another - After a while there is a connection
a concentration again of the crowd into line
& 7 loose horses on ~~an~~ ^{perhaps} ~~trailing~~ ^{thru} the human
avenue as fast as a little good attached & the
shouts of the multitude can urge the excited beasts
At the end they say a curtain stretched across
the street stops their career - This is one of

this time - honored customs of the Carnival - For
I dined with the exception of Sunday at 3 P.M.
this venture ^{as soon as} commenced with - & such is the Car-
nival wk. "archers on worthy Christmas Cent."
Our exp. acquaintance on the lower flat, are trying
to guide me into going to a Subscription hall on
Tuesday, prob. where the object is to see the turn-
out of the Ital. ladies who in order to raise money
for the poor from foreigners are willing to show
their goods - It is in vain to tell them I am married
& proper object of aversion - She can't seem to take
it in - The pretty daughters' extraneous, whose first-
will it is, are almost considerably pathetic -
I am going to see - by the way - the light-silk skirt
to be made over this week.

Mrs. J. Garrison who
is something of a wag & judge has an infant son
who she says looks so much like Pa. Garrison
(that is Mr. L.) that it is really embarrassing
to smile him - Another little choice bit is con-
tributed to most I think & had better perhaps be
private delirium - visiting ~~in~~ ⁱⁿ studies or flowers
he is expected on the written character of public works
of art in Boston & to clinch his argument said how
Thomas Powers statue of Webster what ed. he would
be - as he entered into a tolerably elaborate criticism
of the same kind let me with me on Boston Mall
I find it not very difficult to believe.

I wish you could see the wild-flowers brought home ~~and~~
or a single from a country no, a job - outside the well
well - numerous - you wd. not know them - not like
ours - but no complaint - & various in color - Crocuses,
violets, & others I do not know, with wh. the fields
are thick - seen - flowers are everywhere - col-
lected & ground - as well as wild.

I recd. a letter
from Miss Bartol who is now at Florence
having gone there from Naples where she with
her party had spent a month - She says her health
is better - but that her old difficulties are not over.

come. That she is taking darker sides & finds
the country around her very beautiful. If it were
not for the excessive heat I like to spend
a summer month at Lorient. I am afraid
on Ad's cell. & spend the summer here
in that, I mean, for she is very fond of
whatever takes hold of her is so obstinate in
character as was proved at Milton last year
that I shd. fear to any added danger of climate.
but we shall see. I believe it does not locate
you to any speculations on this subject, and
thinks perhaps increase of solicitude instead
of giving you the serene results of thought.
I want you to give my best remembrance &
love to Lizzie Swanson - poor L. I know she
will mourn for that sad little waif - &
also to the Wabsons - for I did not tell me
anything about them - but I hope they are
a ^{good deal} better than when I last knew of
them. I am thankful that the winter
this frosty is kindly - is blowing off so
pleasantly. May this & other winters I can
now have only good & blessing in store for dear
mother & father & all. Thank better for
his letter wh. was a succinct summary of
political gossip or for some time past
so it is possible that other village biographies
are writing & other poems are winning their
those wh. are written by & overloading the heads
Mr. & Leath? Well - well. This way
Miss Sterling joins with us & the rest of the
party come up to us - but the - drink is not
the formidable affair then that it is at home
merely a Cup of tea is headed & call guest
about the room - & we never have tea. Sewer
for company. I don't know what "Cere Concomitant
ills" is - perhaps it is correlative with Pontius
Pilate's pump. God bless you.